

THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET CHRONICLE

Week of December 5, 2011

Vol. 31, Issue 16

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No prayer room for Muslim students

Dante Vidal Silguero

Asst. News Editor

There are currently over 300 Muslim students studying at PUC, all of whom must perform the five Islamic prayers. For most students, that means taking breaks during two or three of their classes in order to fulfill the Islamic obligation of as many as four prayers while on campus.

Fajr must be performed before sunrise, Dhuhr at true noon, Asr in the afternoon, Maghrib after the sunset and Isha'a at dusk. Because the prayer times are based on the position of the sun in the sky, they will change depending on a person's place on the earth and the season. For example, on Dec. 5 Fajr begins at 5:40 a.m., Dhuhr at 11:42 a.m., Asr at 2:02 p.m., Maghrib at 4:20 p.m. and Isha'a at 5:43 p.m.

Fawwaz Alshammari, a senior studying electrical engineering technology and president of PUC's Muslim Student Association (MSA), said he has been trying to get a specified prayer room for Muslim students since he re-activated the MSA in the spring 2011 semester.

A petition started by PUC student Roger Jestes has been filed with Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Ralph Rogers, asking

that the Muslim students have access to a room for prayer.

While the Muslim students have been figuring out ways to meet their prayer obligations, such as praying in the corners of classrooms or in the library, Alshammari said that such conditions are not in keeping with the Islamic prayer ritual. He said that Muslims are advised in the Qur'an to perform their prayers in a "small, quiet, and clean place."

When the administration informed Alshammari that as a state school, PUC could not sponsor a prayer room for a specified religion, Alshammari replied that the room would not be just for Muslim students, but could be a "Meditation Center" for all students.

"College universities throughout the U.S., both private and public, have designated religious meditation rooms for students of all faiths," Alshammari said.

PUC Chancellor Thomas Keon voiced his sympathy for the Muslim students' quandary, though he held the position that the school is not legally allowed to host a specified prayer room. Although the administration's hands seem to be bound in red tape, Keon shared his suggestion to work out a resolution to benefit all faiths.



Photo Provided

During the MSA Fast-a-thon event on Aug. 29 Bassam Abdul Rhman and Alsehli Majed Hamed have to pray out in the Calumet Falls student lounge area. Since Muslim students do not have a specific room for prayer on campus, they are forced to find other places to fulfill their daily prayer routine.

"We need to have a better, long-term approach to resolving the concern. I have suggested that the campus, for the first time, develop an inter-faith counsel and I would like to find church leaders from the region and work with them to see if we can come up with a resolution. In the meantime, I have approached the Vice Chancellors about properties for

sale near the campus we may be able to purchase for this specific purpose," Keon said.

Keon's idea would be for private donors to purchase space near the campus and donate it to the school for use as a "religious center." A center open to all religions and at all hours would allow Muslim students to pray their five obligatory prayers while still al-

lowing students of other faiths to use the space available.

Keon wishes for students of all faiths on campus to reach out to him in an effort to form this inter-faith counsel and to identify community religious leaders who may be willing to assist the campus.

Fighting off final exams

Jessica Gerlich
Entertainment Editor

With the week every college student dreads right around the corner, some students are in panic-mode. Many PUC students are sitting in class wondering where time went, scribbling down every word the professor utters and frantically running to the next class without giving themselves time to think. Others may not even know what to expect for their upcoming final exams, which begin on Dec. 12. Disregard the following tips should help students get their bearings when it comes to final exams.

The perfect study environment

According to ZenCollegeLife.com, the place a student chooses to do his or her studying is extremely important. Starbucks or the student lounge may not be the best place to study; with all the probable distractions. People are everywhere, music and televisions are blaring and there is nowhere to spread books and notes out. A better option would be to come up with a few different solitary study

locations, such as the library and a desk at home. ZenCollegeLife.com also suggests bringing snacks to that special study location to curb any random cravings and keep the mind going.

Think positive

A lot of students convince themselves they are going to fail even when they have studied their little hearts out, when instead they should be confident in their abilities to retain information. CollegeFashion.net suggests that students go into a final exam thinking that they will succeed rather than plummet into the depths of failure. Who needs the extra stress of not believing in themselves?

Repetition and rewriting

SurvivingCollegeLife.com says that rewriting notes is the key to success in studying. Physically copying notes over and over might take time, but it will help students retain information better through the hand cramps. Even if students are just writing (or typing) main points or vocabulary words, going over these concepts



Photo Provided

again will make the brain remember them better.

Suit up for success

On the day of the final exam, it is essential to be sure that every item that could possibly be needed is at hand. Blue books, extra pens

and pencils, standalone erasers and bottled water are just a few important test-taking items. A jacket or sweater will also do wonders, as it is practically impossible to take a final exam while shivering. UniversityLanguage.com urges students to read directions

carefully at least twice and to re-read answers before leaving the classroom if time permits. There is no reason to suffer from silly mistakes such as missing a part of the directions or forgetting an answer.

ADMINISTRATIVE update

Upcoming winter weather & decisions to close campus

The first blast of winter is just around the corner—a telling reminder that, occasionally, in the interest of personal safety, it is necessary to suspend classes and/or close the campus and Academic Learning Center due to adverse weather conditions or other sudden, unusual or unexpected circumstances.

The decision to alter normal campus operations means either of the following is in effect:

"CLASSES ARE CANCELED"

This means that ALL classes scheduled to meet that particular day at on- and off-campus sites are canceled, but all university offices, departments, and services remain open. OR . . .

"THE UNIVERSITY IS CLOSED"

When the university is closed, only functions deemed essential to university operations would take place until further notice is given. The university is considered closed to all persons except those pre-designated necessary to perform essential functions.

So that all campus personnel affected by either of the above conditions can receive information promptly and accurately, official notification will be communicated via one or more of the following communication channels:

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS:

Internet – Purdue University Calumet Website – www.purduecal.edu

Public Address System – a campus-wide system to broadcast live messages providing instruction to the intra campus community.

"Alert me" text messaging system – When this system is activated, subscribers will receive a brief text message via their cell phone. **Note:** To subscribe to text messaging, go to www.purduecal.edu/alertme.

Signage (Posted) – signage placed on building door entrance(s) providing information and/or direction.

E-mail – Outlook e-mail distribution can be used to deliver messages electronically and instantly to all faculty, staff and student e-mail addresses.

Signage (LED) – exterior electronic message boards located on 173rd St. and at the Academic Learning Center.

Local Media – The Assistant Vice Chancellor for University Relations serves as the official University spokesperson and will disseminate messages to the following media:

Radio

WGN (720 am – Chicago)	WJOB (1230 am – Hammond)
WBBM (780 am – Chicago)	WLOI (1540 am – LaPorte)
WAKE (1500 am and 105.5 fm – Valparaiso)	WXRJ (103.9 fm – Valparaiso)
WEFM (95.9 fm – Michigan City)	WZVN (107 fm – Valparaiso)
WIMS (1420 am – Michigan City)	WLTH (1270 am – Gary)
NW Indiana Lake Shore Public Radio (89.1 fm – Merrillville)	

Television (Chicago stations unless otherwise indicated)

ABC-TV/Channel 7	CLTV News	NBC-TV/Channel 5
CBS-TV/Channel 2	Fox-TV/Channel 32	WGN-TV/Channel 9
NW Indiana Lake Shore Public Television/Channel 56 (Merrillville)		

Purdue University Calumet Information Center – Incoming calls to 219/989-2993 or 219/989-2400 are received by a pre-recorded voice mail message to provide current information.

NOTIFICATION TO "RESUME" NORMAL CAMPUS OPERATIONS

At the direction of the Chancellor and/or Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services, notification to resume normal campus operations will be communicated via Purdue University Calumet's homepage (www.purduecal.edu). Additional channels may be used as appropriate.

NOTE: Radio and television stations typically do not announce resumption of activities/operations.

Our best advice in the event of challenging, inclement weather...
Refer to the Purdue Calumet web site. The most current campus updates will be published there first.

What's Going On? A look around PUC...

Little Town of Bethlehem

Date: Dec 6, 7:30 p.m.

Location: SUL Cafeteria

Details: An inspiring true story of three men in a land gripped by fear, hatred, and division.

Host: Echo PC and other student organizations

Center at 219-989-2709. To make an appointment, go to www.purduecal.edu/wellness.

Faculty/Staff Appreciation Days

Date: Dec 6-7, 2011

Location: SUL Calumet Campus Shop

Details: A 30% discount on select apparel and gifts on these days only.

*Tuesday, December 6 - 9am-5pm

*Wednesday, December 7 - 9am-5pm

Please bring your ID

On-Campus Blood Screening

Dec 7, 7 a.m. - 10 a.m.

Location: FNRC 141

Details: Open to all staff, students, their families and friends. All official retirees and all staff covered by or eligible for the Purdue insurance plan, and their spouses or same-sex domestic partners receive a free (\$32) profile once per academic year.

Please remember to fast (water is OK) for 12 hours prior to your appointment.

Cash, checks or charge cards (Visa, MasterCard or Discover) are accepted as payment.

For more information, call the Wellness

Anyone interested in publicizing events, organizations, clubs or departments in "What's Going On?" must submit briefs the Monday before publication. The Chronicle does not guarantee placement of briefs submitted.

Please limit submissions to four sentences and include the first and last name of the contact person.

Briefs may be submitted via e-mail at chronicle@cpurduecal.edu or campus cc:mail - Chronicle or to the newsroom located in the Student Union and Library building, room 344H.

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2200 169th Street • Hammond, IN 46323-2094

Student Union and Library • Room 344H

Tel (219) 989-2547 • Fax (219) 989-2039

E-mail chronicle@purduecal.edu

or campus cc:mail - Chronicle

www.pucchronicle.com

Editor-in-Chief
Dune Lorenz

Sports Editor
Bill Koester

Asst. Photo Editor
Jessica Calhoun

Managing Editor
Brian Lynch

Business Manager
Rey Perez

Photographers
Lulu Zhao
Diamond Johnson
Powell Smith
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Melissa Rios

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Michelle Nunez

Writers
Andrea Drac
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Julie Sipek
Kali Porzel
Randy Shaw
Kayla Greenwell
Bobby Markos
Jeff Scott
Michelle Mullins

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Liaison**
Jade Greenberg

News Editor
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Advisor
Jerry Davich

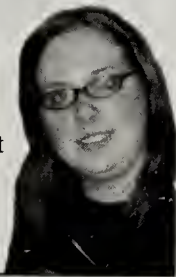
Entertainment Editor
Jessica Gerlich

Photo Editor
Morgan Walker

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No time for stress

Jessica Gerlich
Entertainment Editor



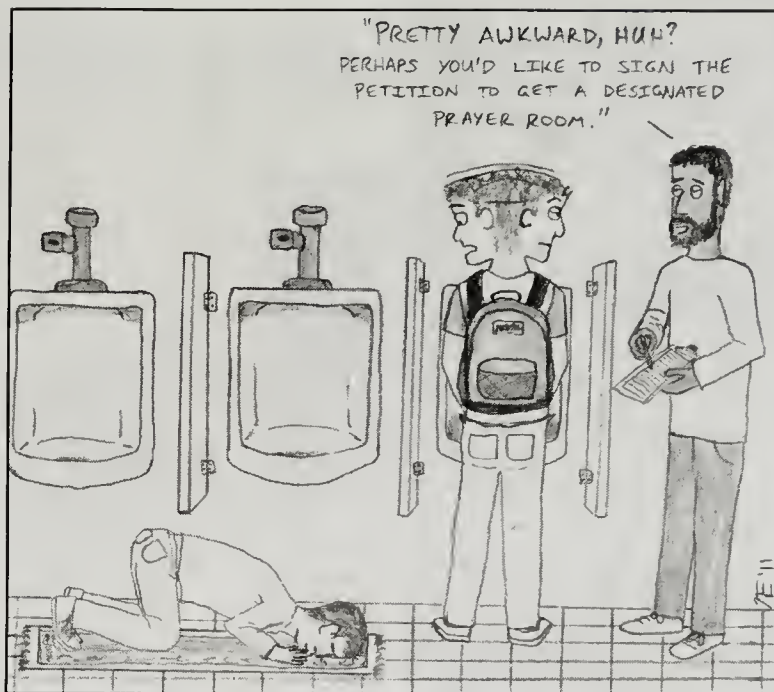
The holidays are approaching. Finals week is almost upon us. Projects, papers and tests are looming heavily in the air with the sugarplums, on top of shopping and cleaning for whatever holiday you happen to partake in. That's without mentioning everyday jobs, which get busier during the winter season, or the foreboding extra cold and snowy Chicago winter we are all looking forward to. All that said, I think I can speak for the students of PUC when I say "we are stressed!"

I've always been the first person to freak out when I start getting overwhelmed, but I've been working diligently this semester to come up with ways to make sure my head doesn't explode into little pieces of overused brain, blood and hair all over an elevator in the SUL building.

First, I've found schedules extremely helpful. I have my days laid out on paper – setting aside time for homework, editing, vegging in front of the TV and plenty of other random activities. Now, I am not saying that I constantly follow this schedule, but it helps ease my crazed mind to see that all the stuff I need and want to do fit into a day (or a week). I even set aside an hour or so a week to work on my resume. It helps.

Next, I've been making sure that I get adequate sleep. I cannot emphasize enough how important sleep is. I still have nights that I only get three or four hours, but if possible I try to sleep for six to eight. It helps to get used to getting up in the morning, too. Since I've started waking up at least an hour before I need to leave the house (as opposed to when I used to get up ten minutes beforehand, at most), I tend to be calmer and able to deal with things better throughout the day.

The thing I've found most helpful when it comes to stress relief is reading and writing things that have nothing to do with classwork. Yes, there is plenty of classwork to do, but getting away from it all and actually reading books and articles for enjoyment forces me to climb out of my own head and into someone else's. Writing on my own helps me focus my thoughts, which makes it easier to write for class. Since you are probably saying "I'm not a reader or a writer," let me tell you that this concept applies to what you like to do as well. Art projects, math problems, TV programs, dancing, whatever. Just do it outside of the rest of your busy life. Find things that take you out of your stressful world.



"Bored in School" by Nikko Elliott

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Dune Lorenz, Editor-in-Chief
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Brandon Hayes, News Editor
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Prayer in school: accommodating all faiths

The issue: Muslim students want a prayer room.

Our stance: Student equality and acceptance are top priority, but there are limits.

The comic above, while just one student's interpretation, points out that there may be some complications with Muslim students having to create makeshift prayer areas without a dedicated prayer room. It is not exactly what one would call peaceful to have to pray in the middle of SUL's TV lounge, or hijack an empty classroom only to be interrupted mid-ceremony.

Such scenarios are far from harmonious, so who can blame students for petitioning for a designated prayer room? Surely, we must be more inclined to support each other after the sudden amount of unity that has come out of negative situations such as the conflict with Associate Professor Maurice Eisenstein. Regardless of their religious stance, students should be in a far more receptive mood than previously found on campus.

And when we are attempting to form a campus community collectively amongst the student body, why not? Equality and

acceptance among students, be it over their sex, religion or ethnicity, are among our top priorities as an ever-evolving student body. Nobody wants to be outcast because they are a certain ethnicity, let alone for their religion.

Still, giving Muslim students a prayer room is not without its own problems. Thinking of all the different students we have on campus from various countries and religions, catering to one might increase the deficiency of another. Most religious practices are not without their own supportive modifiers, such as a designated prayer area for Muslims or a church for Christians.

If the administration agreed to supply Muslim students with a designated prayer room, would we not have to extend that same hospitality to any religion practiced by students if we wanted true equality?

For example, a student practicing Shinto may wish for a

Shinto shrine to be made available on campus, or a Buddhist may wish for a Buddhist temple. While these kind of accommodations would aid our respective religious practices greatly, they may not be entirely practical if the university set a precedent to cater to each one.

Certainly, the idea makes the university's hands-off approach somewhat understandable, as students are still allowed to practice their religions to the best of their individual ability (on their own time), as well as form organizations centered around these religions.

Regardless of whether or not any resolution would open a floodgate, students should still be thrilled for any advancement of equality amongst us. With religious bickering and racism still prominent in our world even near the end of 2011, it would certainly be nice to see movements succeed in finally putting these aging and unwelcome problems to rest.

A waste of time

Dante Vidal
Silguero
Asst. News Editor



Famed evangelical preacher Ray Comfort once printed copies of Charles Darwin's "On the Origin of Species" with a self-written introduction, and handed them out for free to students on a college campus. In simplest terms, Comfort's introduction made the common logical fallacy often made by those who deny evolution: that the "chance" of evolution occurring is just like a book being made by every piece of it randomly falling into place and all of the ink dripping into just the right pattern to make words, margins, spaces, etc. The pastor then gave an interview where he arrogantly claimed his words had strength behind them because Richard Dawkins told students who received the book to rip out the introduction.

Dawkins' instruction to rip out Comfort's introduction was not given in fear of the truth behind the words, but because reading it constituted a waste of time. In the academic world, wasting time is an unforgivable action; this is true for scientists, researchers, professors and students alike.

With finals just next week, it is important that we, as students, do not waste our time.; I don't mean keeping yourselves from procrastinating either. What I mean is smart studying and smart test taking. When studying for your finals, don't try to reinvent the wheel. Think of your classes, think of what you already know from the class and think of all of the things you don't know or don't know so well. Taking a calculus class? Already know how to do complex derivatives? Then don't study them! Have you been having trouble with Newton's Method? Then study that. It seems like a very simple concept to study the things you don't understand and put off studying for the things for which you hold a strong understanding.

Many students last semester, this semester and in semesters to come, have and will, continue to make the same basic mistake of trying to study EVERYTHING.

Smart test taking is a bit more complex, because each test will be different. There will be multiple choice questions, true/false questions, short essay questions, fill-in-the-blank questions and probably a lot of other styles of finals. Once again, the principle to hold on to is to not waste time. If you find yourself having trouble with a particular question, move on from it and come back. Often times, professors will even (either knowingly or unknowingly) hint at answers to previous questions with later ones on the test.

With these newly acquired strategies, perhaps we can make more time by wasting less of it.

COMMENTS?

Write to us and see your thoughts in print!

The Chronicle Editorial Policy

The views expressed in submitted commentaries and letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of The Chronicle or Purdue University Calumet. The Chronicle is not an official publication of Purdue University Calumet. The Chronicle welcomes reader input. Letters and commentaries must include the writer's name, class standing or other affiliation and a telephone number for verification. The more concise the letter, the better chance of publication. All materials submitted to The Chronicle become the property of The Chronicle. The Chronicle reserves the right to edit for clarity, accuracy, space and news style. Deadline for submissions is the Friday before the publication.

Readers can contact Jessica at chronicle_entertainment@yahoo.com or (219) 989-2547.

Readers can contact Dante at chronicle_newseditor@yahoo.com or (219) 989-2547.



It was about this time last year when I presented an idea with a packet containing information and promotional items to Student Activities. I was trying to get PUC to host an event for the St. Baldrick's Foundation. The idea is quite simple: sign up, let your hair grow out and get someone to donate \$20 to shave your head. The money raised will go to the foundation and help fund research for childhood cancers. They supply donation envelopes, clippers, etc.

All that is needed is for PUC to donate a place for the event and for a student fraternity, sorority or other student group to step up and take on the fundraiser. This was rejected by Student Activities last year, with the assumption of staff that one of the school groups would accept it. Sadly, no one did. This brings me to the challenge of trying to get things started through appealing to everyone to participate and get someone in their fraternity or group to take the lead. This is good for our image, as well as bringing students of every age, race, creed and color together to stand for a single cause. If this is accepted soon, I will personally donate my own time, ink cartridges and hair for the event. I get a crew cut every other week; however, I will stop cutting it until the day of the event. Please give me a reason to grow it out.

The reason behind my passion for this organization goes back to when I was seventeen years old. A friend of the family that was working for my father took his 6-year-old daughter to the eighth doctor to get a lump in her throat checked out. That doctor finally did what no others had done before. He did a biopsy on the lump and found that she had been walking around with throat cancer for two years.

I donated money at fundraisers for her and did as much as I could. I could only sit back and ask how she was doing, as her hair fell out from chemotherapy and she began to lose weight. Surgery and treatment was rough on her and costly to her father, but she pulled through and is still alive as of two years ago.

Many children in hospitals for all types of cancer are not so lucky. Many of them will not be home for the holidays. No single organization can say for sure what amount of money will find the cure, but think about what I have just mentioned. Challenge other groups for prizes, bragging rights and anything else that needs to be wagered. Whatever it takes! Is it really that hard to donate \$20 and/or get your head shaved, with the knowledge that your money will help give a child battling cancer a chance to one day celebrate their birthday or a holiday with their family?

For most of us, the hair will grow back, but for many of them, the battle rages on.

If anyone is willing to accept the fundraiser, contact beeker219@gmail.com for more information. Serious inquiries only, please.

Courtesy of Mike Vanderberg

THE
Are you the type to stay in tune with all the **current** events? Perhaps the type of **person** who has to delve into the **latest** in **fashion trends**, **books**, or **movies**. Maybe you're the type of person that **has to watch** every single game of **every sport**, or maybe just a few **here and there**. Have a natural knack for what's going on **around you** and can **capture the moment** in a single **snapshot**? Have an eye for organization and **placement**? Regardless how you feel about it, The Chronicle **needs you!**

SUL 344h 219.989.2547



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1/3-mile north of Interstate 80/94, three blocks east of Indianapolis Blvd. to campus and south at the traffic light into the south parking lot.

'Skyrim' is a winter wonderland

Brian Lynch
Managing Editor

According to many influential members of the gaming industry, strictly single-player games are dead. Virtually every game released today contains some sort of multiplayer component, and it is obvious developers believe a game cannot succeed without going online. So, in this era of online shooters and massively multiplayer experiences, it would take a truly exceptional game to ignore the trends and still produce a hit. Fortunately, that is exactly what developer Bethesda has done with their latest offering, "The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim."

Set 200 years after the events of "Oblivion," players begin their adventures in Skyrim as a prisoner being transported to their execution for unknown reasons. After arriving at their destination and witnessing a few of their fellow captives executed, players are led to the chopping block. Fortunately, just before the killing blow is delivered, a massive dragon appears in the sky, sending everyone fleeing in terror. After a hasty escape, players learn they are the Dovahkiin, a legendary hero with dragon blood coursing through their veins. Tasked with being the only one capable of defeating the rising dragon scourge, the drag-

onborn must embark on a journey of truly epic proportions.

"Epic" almost feels like an understatement in a game like "Skyrim." While the "Elder Scrolls" series has always excelled at creating massive worlds and engaging stories, developer Bethesda has upped the ante and created their most impressive game to date. From the moment players take control of their character until long after the credits have rolled, the snowy realm of Skyrim never fails to be awe inspiring.

Like previous entries in the series, "Skyrim" gives players the opportunity to play the game however they choose. There are 10 playable races to choose from, each with their own unique racial benefits. Nords, for example, have a natural resistance to frost while High Elves are more adept at using magic. These benefits, while not drastically affecting gameplay, allow players an early advantage depending on their preferred play style.

Once players have sorted out their characters, they can set about improving their skills. Virtually every action in the game is tied to a set of skills that improve with use. If a player picks every lock they find, their lockpicking skill will increase. With each progressive level players gain, they



reddit.com

Dragons are not the only ones capable of shooting flames in "Skyrim."

are given a point to place into one of these skills. These points allow for drastic improvements in a particular area, often adding new abilities and improvements. For example, players who invest their points in crafting can eventually create armor and weapons that are far stronger than any they could otherwise obtain. This approach to leveling feels intuitive and organic, and it is a major improvement on the clunky and cumbersome leveling system of previous games.

In addition to the standard weapons and spells, as a drag-

onborn players can learn shouts, which allow them to perform a variety of powerful and unique attacks. Most of these shouts are learned as the story progresses, but a number of them are hidden in the depths of long-forgotten tombs and in the most remote reaches of Skyrim.

While the main storyline is thrilling on its own, the true heart of the "Elder Scrolls" series has always been the freedom to explore. "Skyrim" is no exception, as the game world is absolutely massive and teeming with things to do and see. Players can easily set out in

any direction and find something to keep them occupied. From ancient dungeons filled with untold treasures, to small secluded towns and villages, "Skyrim" has no shortage of places to explore.

And with a world as stunning as "Skyrim's," exploration is a pleasure. The graphics are absolutely breathtaking. Everything from the windswept tundras of the north to the serene autumn landscape of the southern valleys is rendered beautifully and intricately detailed. At times, the

See Skyrim page 6

Office of Student Activities
www.purduecal.edu/studentactivities



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Student Activities and
Housing & Residential Educ.

Free Pancakes

PUC Student
ID Required

And "Breakfast" Buffet
Monday, Dec. 12

6pm-8pm

Oaken Arbor Café, SUL

While quantities last

ANNUAL PANCAKE STUDY BREAK



Free Fudge Puppies
Monday, Dec. 5

11am-2pm

SUL Concourse

Enjoy homemade waffles on a stick
drizzled with chocolate and choice of
topping, while quantities last!

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workshops, and community
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Start your CcT
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Activities Office,
SUL-104B, for assistance.
8:00am-4:00pm



Student Activities Presents

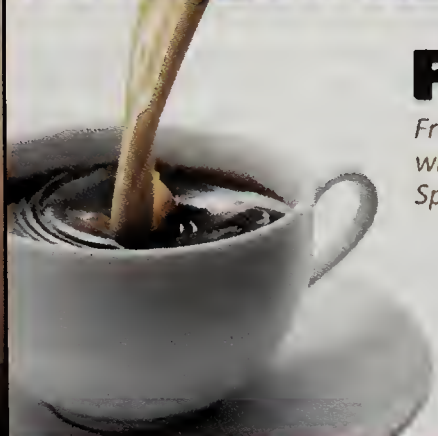
**Family Movie
Night** and
pajama
party

Friday, Dec. 9

5:30pm-8:30pm

TV Room, SUL

Watch "Cars 2" Wear your PJs Dances Snacks Kids Crafts Face Painting



Perk Up!

Free coffee & hot chocolate
while quantities last
Sponsored by Student Activities

Tuesday, Dec. 6

8:30am-10:30am

SUL & CLO Concourses

National Cotton Candy Day

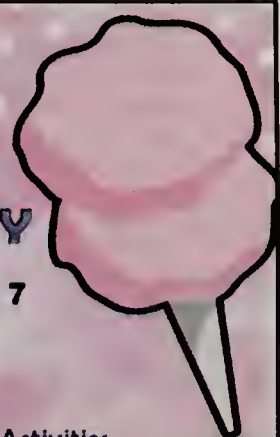
FREE COTTON CANDY

Wednesday, Dec. 7

11am-2pm

SUL Concourse

Sponsored by Student Activities



The Muppets' make a welcome return



wired.com

Jeff Scott
Entertainment Writer

The beloved Muppets make a comeback in this enjoyable comedy, the first Muppets project since the uninspired "Muppets from Space" film 12 years ago. This new reboot, which plays like a sequel to the classic television series "The Muppet Show," gives viewers the right combination of humor, sentiment, satire and musical numbers to create an experience that is as enjoyable for adults as it is for kids. "The Muppets," starring co-writer Jason Segel, succeeds where the last few Muppet films did not: it is actually entertaining.

A young Muppet named Walter grew up as a big fan of the television series, along with his human brother, Gary (Segel). When Gary gets engaged to his girlfriend, Mary (Amy Adams), he makes plans for the three of them to visit California. This gives them a chance to tour Muppet Studios, only to find it deserted. A wealthy businessman, Tex Richman (Chris Cooper), offers to buy the studio and turn it into a museum. Walter discovers that Tex has a secret plot to demolish the studio and drill for oil there instead. Walter, Gary and Mary appeal to Kermit the Frog to put on a telethon and raise the \$10 million needed to buy back the studio from Tex and turn it into a museum.

The movie works best when it pokes good-natured fun at itself, show business and other movies. When Kermit tries to reunite the Muppets, who have gone their separate ways, there is a hint of "Blues Brothers" with a new spin on "We're getting the band back together." Fozzie Bear is working in a Muppets tribute band called "The Mooppets," Gonzo works

for a company that manufactures toilets and Miss Piggy is a fashion editor for French Vogue. The remaining Muppets are recruited in a funny parody of montage sequences. Television gets skewered when a network executive (Rashida Jones) initially declines to broadcast the Muppets telethon, telling them "You are not popular anymore." She only relents when another show is suddenly yanked, leaving her with only the Muppet telethon to replace it.

The movie also lampoons musicals, and there are several production numbers that are corny on the surface, but brilliantly satirical underneath. "Life is a Happy Song" is a takeoff on the goody-goody songs one usually hears in kid's movies. In "Am I Man or a Muppet?" Gary imagines himself as a Muppet while Walter envisions himself as a human. This song is funny and also touching, in its own odd way. Composer Bret McKenzie of "Flight of the Conchords" fame does a remarkable job of finding the right balance of silliness and poignancy.

As likable as all of this is, there are a few problems. There was no reason, for example, for Fozzie to attach whoopee cushions to his feet and say he was wearing "fart shoes." Fozzie has always been known for his one-liners, not for his practical jokes. Worse than that, the gag was not all that funny. Jason Segel seems to be too aware that he is in a kid's movie and plays his part as if he were a child in a man's body. On the other hand, Amy Adams has a field day as the young heroine and Chris Cooper hits all the right notes as the villain.

While "The Muppets" has a few flaws, they are not that far-reaching. Overall, the movie is a lot of fun, with a witty script and enjoyable songs, and it works as a tribute to the long absent characters. It is indeed, like the theme song says, sensational, inspirational, celebrational and Muppetational.



'Lulu': a loser from two legends

Bill Koester
Sports Editor

When an artist sells millions of records, a luxury they enjoy is the financial security to abandon the style that made them so popular and try new things. The only question is, should they?

Heavy metal mainstay Metallica made their name as a thrash band, but over the last two decades, the group has departed from their signature sound and expanded into other musical areas on occasion. These endeavors have been mostly successful, but received a decidedly mixed reception from fans.

Collaboration with The Velvet Underground's Lou Reed has to rank among the most unexpected moves the band could ever make. After a chance meeting at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2009, however, that is exactly what has happened. The result is "Lulu," a double album released this past Halloween.

The record is ostensibly a concept album based on an unproduced play written by Reed, and it is not hard to see why no one produced it. Though it is difficult to tell through the aimlessly sexual and profane lyrics, the play appears to be about a dancer, and contains lots of sex and gory violence. It is kind of like "Black Swan" if it were made by the creators of "Saw."

Aside from the lyrics (and truly awful vocals), Reed's influence on the record is not openly apparent. This still sounds like a Metallica record. Unfortunately, it is not classic thrash Metallica, but artistic risk-taking (in other words, bad) Metallica.

At best, a few of the songs (among them "Pumping Blood" and "Mistress Dread") are not

terrible instrumentally, but they seem incomplete. They basically consist of a simple riff played repeatedly with no bridges or solos. It does not help that many of the songs go on for seven or eight minutes at least, so the band just keeps repetitively playing in circles.

At worst, other tracks are just mixture of sounds that do not really blend together into anything that is in any way pleasant to listen to. It often seems like everyone involved is straining to make something different and artistic but failing and just sounding atrocious.

Whether at its best or worst, the knockout punch that kills the whole album is Reed's aforementioned horrendous vocal work. Every song sounds as if Reed is stoned while talking over the music like a DVD commentary. Even if the lyrics were more coherent instead of weird and impossible, the vocals would still be unlisten-

able, and in a genre where many of the singers scream or growl, that says a lot.

The closest thing that "Lulu" has to a good song is the penultimate track, "Dragon." It still has Reed babbling like a guy in a straightjacket, and it still goes on too long and gets a little repetitive, but listeners who can manage to ignore these things will find at least some elements of the great metal that Metallica used to be all about. But after nearly an hour of garbage preceding it, it is just too little, too late.

"Lulu" is not the worst thing Metallica has ever done (it ranks higher than "St. Anger," if only because the drums do not sound like Lars Ulrich is banging on garbage cans), but it is a big smudge on their legacy. Reed's reputation will probably take a lesser hit than theirs.



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Skyrim

continued from page 5

game's beauty is almost distracting, and it is easy to get derailed by looking out at the massive expanse of Skyrim and marveling at the scenery.

Though, players should not let themselves get too distracted, as the dangers of the untamed wilderness are ever-present. Everything from a bear attack to roving groups of bandits and mercenaries can strike at a moment's notice. Add in the threat of a dragon swooping down at any time, and what was a peaceful stroll through a meadow a second ago quickly becomes a harrowing battle. The variety of things trying to kill the player is quite impressive, and even after a few dozen hours into the game, it is likely players will encounter a completely new type of monster.

For all its charm and quality, "Skyrim" is far from perfect. The artificial intelligence, particu-

larly the companions players can recruit, can be extremely flighty. Often times they will be more of a hindrance than a benefit, like triggering traps in dungeons or charging into battle when players would rather take a stealth approach. They also have a tendency to get lost, forcing players to wait until the AI decides to come jogging back to where they are supposed to be.

While there is an impressive amount of spoken dialogue, a great deal of it is recycled again and again. Players can expect to be teased about someone stealing their sweet roll, or hearing about how a guard would still be adventuring if only he had not taken an arrow to the knee no matter where they venture in Skyrim. Also, with a game this detailed and massive, there are bound to be a few bugs and glitches present. While these pop up from time to time,

none are particularly game breaking, and many fans of Bethesda's games have come to embrace the glitches for the bizarre moments they can create. And after watching a Giant whack a sabrecat over the head, sending it flying hundreds of feet in the air, who can blame them?

With "Skyrim," Bethesda has created a world players can easily spend hours totally immersed in. Between the hundreds of quests and side missions and the sheer joy of exploration, finding a good time to put the controller down may be the biggest challenge of all.

"The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim" is available for PC, PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.



New Rating System

- ★★★★★ ESSENTIAL
- ★★★★ EXCELLENT
- ★★★ AVERAGE
- ★★ POOR
- ★ AWFUL

Intramurals competition raises a racquet

Julie Sipek
Sports Writer

The PUC intramural program held the first round of its semi-annual racquetball tournament on Dec. 1 at the Fitness and Recreation Center.

As always, the participants in the tournament are divided into three groups based on skill level. The B and C Divisions, which consist of the more novice players, competed last week.

This round was played in a round-robin style, in which each player played every other player in their respective division. The five players in the B Division played single games to 11, while the four players in the C Division played single games to 15. This round was used as a seeding round for the playoffs next week, so no one was eliminated.

Although these were the less experienced players, the games were still tight. Several competitors described the competition as being tough.

While many veterans of the tournament returned to compete again this year, the event also fetched a handful of newcomers to the tournament, as well as the sport.

"I just started playing [racquetball] this summer with my friends," PUC freshman Joe

O'Brian, who competed in the B Division, said.

O'Brian's opponent, fall 2010 PUC alum Shaji Quadri, also experienced his first PUC intramural racquetball tournament this year. Quadri had high hopes regarding his performance in this event.

"I hope I am able to stand on my own," Quadri said.

Despite many of the newcomers' efforts, several tournament veterans walked away with the top seeds for next week's round. Returners Santosh Ramu and Arnoldas Pivorius went 4-0 and 2-2, respectively, and received the top

two seeds for the B Division. They were followed by Steve Smock, Quadri and finally O'Brian.

The C Division resulted in Lee Stephen taking the first seed with an undefeated record, followed by Brian Talley, Todd Kalil and Adam Stephen.

Official racquetball rules will preside over the ensuing rounds of the tournament. Competitors will play three games per match instead of one, and there will be eliminations. The A Division will play their preliminary round on Dec. 5 and the championship round for all divisions will be held on Dec. 8 at 5 p.m.



Photo: Margaret Knutsen

Shaji Quadri (right) hits the ball toward opponent Santosh Ramu (left).

Athletic director search begins

Bill Koester
Sports Editor

PUC's search for a new full-time athletic director took off when a committee was formed to seek out quality candidates for the job.

The committee, headed by Executive Assistant to the Chancellor Regina Biddings-Muro, has representation from PUC at all levels. Vice Chancellors Ralph Rogers and Ken Johnston are members, as are Associate Professor of Psychology David Nalbene and Jill Ittersagen from the Office of Advancement. Representing PUC students are Casey Brandon of the SGA and Women's basketball player Brooklyn Short. NIPSCO Public Affairs Manager and PUC alumnus Rick Calinski is also on the committee.

"According to Chancellor Thomas Keon, the committee is a representative group of individuals that would be key to athletic programs," Biddings-Muro said.

The basic requirements that the committee seeks in a candidate are a bachelor's degree and two or three years of experience in some sort of college athletics environment. The committee also stresses skills of working with people, planning and coordinating things, particularly fundraising. Aside from the requirements outlined in the job description, there is little concrete vision of what the new director should look like.

The committee enlisted the aid of Carr Sports Associates, Inc., to find potential candidates. This firm, headed by consultant Bill Carr, has a proven track record, having represented such major college athletic programs as Duke, North Carolina and LSU. Having Carr on their case is a big advantage in the minds of the committee members and administration.

"In my estimation, we have the top guy in the country," current PUC Interim Athletic Director John Friend said.

Friend, who is not on the committee, served as athletic director from 1980-2001, and was also employed as a consultant. He stepped into the position once more on an interim basis after the previous director of four years, Robert Bunnell, resigned in August.

As athletic director, Bunnell, along with former Chancellor Howard Cohen, instituted an expansion plan that saw PUC add six more sports teams, with plans to add two soccer teams in 2012, and baseball and softball teams in 2013. Bunnell also spearheaded the initiative to fund and build the new athletic facility at Dowling Park. According to Keon, construction is set to begin in the near future, starting with new tennis courts.

The new athletic director will continue with this overall plan.

Keon indicated that there were no more specific plans on the horizon for the new director, but does not deny that the long-term vision for the athletic department is bigger.

The new athletic director will report directly to Keon, whereas before they reported to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. This change in command makes it clear that more power will be allotted to the position than it had in years past. The director will also no longer be in charge of the fitness center or intramurals, putting their focus solely on the athletic program.

"It's an indication that I'm elevating the importance of athletics," Keon said.

PUC has stated their goal is to have their sports teams move to NCAA Division III. Such a move would mean more expenses paid by the organization instead of the school, such as transportation and lodging during road trips. Administrators also agree that the NCAA will raise PUC's status in the local community and the overall athletic radar.

"The NCAA brand is the gold standard in the mind of the common fan," Friend said.

Aside from becoming a member of the NCAA, the reason for raising the profile of PUC's athletic program is part of Keon's overall plan to make PUC a full major university, instead of, in his words, "the commuter school around the corner."

"Athletics is part of how PUC is defined to the public," Keon said. "I want to hire an athletic director who will reach out to students and staff to ensure athletics is fully integrated to all aspects of what we do as a university."

The committee understands this vision, and is seeking a candidate who is willing to build a strong program that will attract good athletes and elevate sports to a major part of PUC campus life.

"We want someone who will make PUC a complete university that people from all over want to come to, and who will give them reason to come," Rogers said.

The committee has already met with Carr Sports Associates, Inc., to begin the search. The firm will collect some resumes in the near future for the committee to look over, and the top candidates will be interviewed. The committee will then make their recommendation to Keon, who will make the final decision on who gets the job.

PUC hopes to have a new athletic director by the end of the spring 2012 semester, and is confident that the position will be filled with a quality candidate in that timetable.

"It's always difficult to find your ideal candidate, but lots of people want good jobs," Keon said. "I think we'll attract good people."

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Eagles take flight against PUC

Michelle Calhoun
Sports Writer

The battle for the CCAC has begun for the PUC men's basketball team.

The team's first game in conference play was against the Judson Eagles on Nov. 30. The game left PUC fans on the edge of their seats.

The starting lineup consisted of guards Martel Jackson, Drew Ridlen, Alex Richman and An-

drew Anderson, and center Trent Tucker. With Jackson scoring the first two points for PUC, the game started off optimistically.

The first half of the game ended with PUC in the lead with the score at 53-42. Not only was the team leading by points, but they were winning the battle on the boards, as well. Five of the 16 rebounds in the first half were credited to Anderson.

In the second half of the game, however, things began to go south for PUC. By the

For the first 10 minutes of the second half, PUC maintained their lead, though Judson closed in on them. With about 7 minutes left in the game, the Eagles finally took the lead.

With the last minute of the game ticking away on the clock and the score at 78-72 in favor of the Eagles, Richman sank a three-pointer. Shortly after that, the lead contender on the Eagles, guard Josh Edwards, responded by making two free throws. Seconds later, Ridlen came back by hitting a two-point shot.

With about half a minute to go, Jackson made two free throws, bringing the score to 80-79, advantage Judson. Voudrie called a timeout to decide a final play in a last-chance effort to get victory. Jackson got the ball and took a shot just as the buzzer rang. The ball missed the net, leaving PUC with a bitter ending.

Voudrie explained that the final play was designed to have all the players be available to take the shot. Jackson had the ball, as guard Kedric Williams was on the roll, with Ridlen, Richman, or Anderson on the kickout.

Even with all players in a position to make a shot, there was also the matter of whether Jackson would be able to pass them the ball or not.

"Their defense did a good job staying on him with two guys, and



Photo: Nathyn Gibson

Andrew Anderson achieves a double-double Wednesday in PUC's game against Judson, getting 10 rebounds and 13 rebounds during the game.

they just blocked the shot," Voudrie said.

The next home game for PUCmen's basketball is Dec. 6 against Roosevelt at 7 p.m.



Photo: Nathyn Gibson

Martel Jackson scoring a total of 24 points during PUC's game against Judson, but losing to Judson 80-79 Wednesday night in the FRC.

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